

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

US
15686
28.12

Henry Codman Potter, 1834-1908.

US 15886.25.12

HARVARD COLLEGE
LIBRARY



THE BEQUEST OF

EVERT JANSEN WENDELL
CLASS OF 1882
OF NEW YORK

1918

UB 15686.21.12

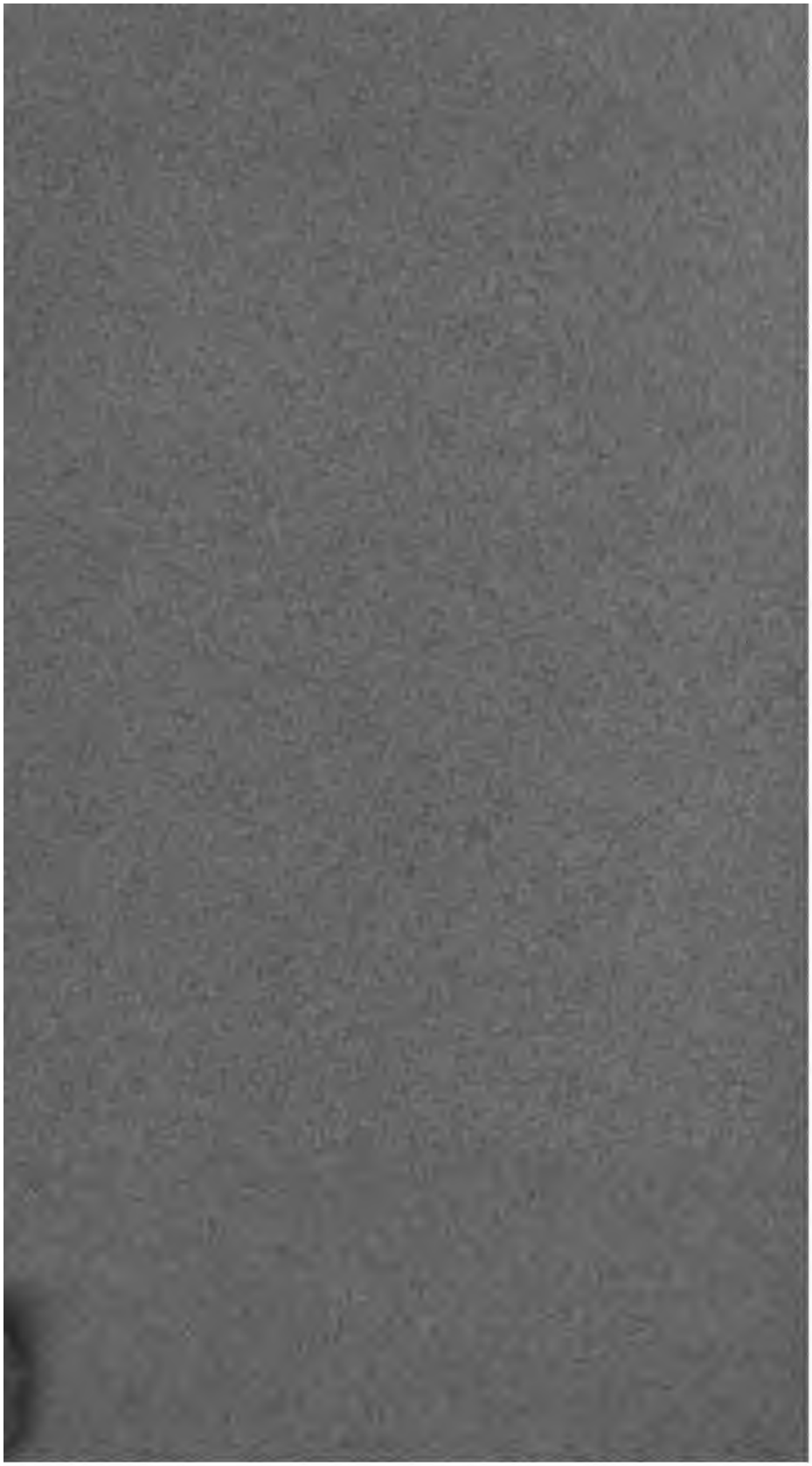
HENRY CODMAN POTTER

Memorial Addresses

AT

The Century Association

DECEMBER 12, 1908





HENRY CODMAN POTTER



HENRY CODMAN POTTER

Memorial Addresses

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE CENTURY ASSOCIATION

December 12, 1908

NEW YORK

PRINTED FOR THE CENTURY ASSOCIATION

1908

US 5686.28.12

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
FROM
THE BEQUEST OF
EVERT JANSEN WENDELL
1918

HENRY CODMAN POTTER

BISHOP OF NEW YORK

BORN 1834 DIED 1908

Elected Member
THE CENTURY ASSOCIATION
1869

Vice-President
THE CENTURY ASSOCIATION
1883-1895

President
THE CENTURY ASSOCIATION
1895-1906

Elected Honorary Member
THE CENTURY ASSOCIATION
1906

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

HON. JOHN BIGELOW

ADDRESS

NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER

ADDRESS

MARVIN R. VINCENT

THE WARRIOR–PRIEST

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

ADDRESS

JOSEPH H. CHOATE

ADDRESS BY
PRESIDENT JOHN BIGELOW

As this was an extraordinary meeting of our association, and for an extraordinary occasion, it seemed to be proper, and I suggested to the committee on arrangements, that there should be an extraordinary chairman to conduct it. The suggestion did not meet with the favor that I expected or that I thought it deserved. I was compelled to yield to the wishes of my associates and take the chair, presumably because I chance to be the successor of our lamented associate and friend.

I yielded, however, with somewhat less reluctance from the fact that I suppose I knew the associate, whom we have met to honor tonight, long before he was known by any member of this association.

In 1831 I was examined by his uncle and predecessor in this Episcopal diocese, the Rev. Horatio Potter, for admission to

Washington College, as it was then called, now known as Trinity College, and from him I learned all the algebra I ever knew. In 1834 I was persuaded to join one of my brothers who had matriculated in Union College. There I was in the habit of seeing our lamented associate and his brothers during my senior year. They were then pursuing their studies in the academy at Schenectady, while their father was a professor and executive head of the college. Dr. Nott, the actual president, appeared rarely at the college, except on Sunday afternoon. One of these lads afterwards became president of Union College; another became a very leading member of the delegation of New York in Congress, and was seriously considered as a candidate for governor to succeed Governor Tilden.

The father of our lamented associate, who was practically the executive head of the College, was also one of our professors, and to him I am under great obligations for his illuminating oral commentaries upon the intellectual philosophy of Abercrombie, a work now not much known, but then, I think very justly esteemed.

I pray you to excuse me for dwelling so long upon these events that are of such comparatively trivial importance, while we have among us so many members who are

competent to speak with plenary authority of the professional, official, public, and social life and services, and the altogether brilliant career of the distinguished prelate whose absence we mourn tonight.

However, before calling upon any of those gentlemen, I will ask Mr. Cary to read the resolution adopted by the Board of Management, which has summoned us together tonight.

MR. EDWARD CARY: The following resolution was adopted by the Board of Management at their November meeting, in connection with the proposal for the present meeting:

RESOLVED, That in the death of the Right Reverend Henry Codman Potter the Century suffers a great loss. He was intimately associated with us for nearly two-score years. His election as President was but the final expression of the regard in which he was held, and a recognition of the completeness with which he represented the spirit of the Century.

Bishop Potter's eminence in the Church, his peculiar service in constructive and organized philanthropy, his constant influence on the public sentiment of this community and of the nation, are matters of record elsewhere. His fellow-members of the Century desire to express their affectionate sense of his endearing qualities. His lofty aims, the scope and variety of his interests, his broad knowledge and experience of the world impressed his bearing with a certain conscious dignity. His

simplicity and sincerity, his kindliness and considerateness, his manly respect for that in others which he respected in himself; these, united with his lambent humor and illuminating wit, have made our association with him a precious and fertile memory. We part with him in deep sorrow; the heritage his friendly companionship has created for us can never be exhausted.

ADDRESS OF
NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER

MR. PRESIDENT AND CENTURIONS: It is a fortunate custom, in this company of comrades and companions, to pause each year for an hour while we hear told, with loving insight and skill, the story of those who, during the year that has gone, have passed to where, beyond these voices, there is peace.

Tonight we pause for an hour to pay the tribute of affectionate respect and regard to a Centurion, a Churchman and a citizen who stands out from among his fellows, by reason of the character, the eminence, the length and the distinction of his service to his kind.

Plutarch has somewhere written that it is difficult to learn how to live in a democracy. Could he have foreseen the difficulties of the democracy of a later day, he would not have hesitated to strengthen that striking statement.

In the few moments at my service I wish to point out as briefly as I may and as clearly as I can that Bishop Potter had learned how to live in a democracy, and that he had come to serve for us, who were his companions, and for those who are to follow us and him, as a shining example of citizenship and of service. Bishop Potter had that high and lofty conception of his station in Church and State which would have led him to respond with prompt emphasis to the insolent question of a modern Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" with the answer, "Yes, for the sake of brotherhood."

He had learned and taught and lived the fact that the surely bad citizen is the selfish citizen and that the surely good citizen is the citizen in service. One likes to think of the many-sided interest, of the generous enthusiasm and of the fine courage that marked his public career.

He knew and he measured the full value of popularity, and I think he knew its limitations and its dangers. He knew that the time comes to every leader of opinion when the principles in which he believes and the convictions which he holds compel him to stand with the few, perhaps even by himself.

The demand which character makes of intelligence is, that the man who believes shall, when the time comes, dare to stand alone, if

alone it must be. I have in mind an incident in the history of our city when an angry and almost anguished public opinion was seeking to find some form and mode of expression to improve our government and to lead our city's life out onto a higher and nobler plane. There were differences of opinion as to what procedure should be followed. Should the stand be made for principle or should sacrifice of principle be made, the more surely to lay hold of instant success, perhaps at the everlasting cost of the principle itself?

How Bishop Potter met that crisis I would like to read. I hold in my hand a brief paragraph which I have taken from a letter that he addressed, in 1895, to Mr. Fulton Cutting. He said this:

"A base alliance is not justifiable, in my judgment, for the accomplishment of a good end. It is not expedient, it is not sound political wisdom, to compromise principle, even for the sake of electing good men or keeping bad men out of office. I can quite appreciate the temptation to surrender a position of independence which for the moment seems likely only to invite defeat, for the equivocal alliance which promises victory; and I can no less appreciate the reluctance to appear obstinate or impractical, which has doubtless led many good men into a partnership which promises a victory

over a common foe. But it seems to me that such a victory will cost the very position which it proposes to defend. I believe that a victory won by an alliance with corrupt men surrenders the very vantage ground from which we can successfully hope to fight them. I believe that the great mass of our citizens who have no personal ends to serve in an election are ready to stand by any group of men, however small, who will not consent to a base alliance even to attain a good end. Whatever the present may have in store for them, the future is theirs. Meantime, I am with them heart and soul."

Those were brave words bravely spoken, and the time will come when we shall remember them and him and the fact that he spoke them. For there can be no doubt that the future is theirs, wherever the path of immediate victory may seem to lead; and I count it no small service to this city of millions of people, with conflicting interests, with diverse aims, with partial knowledge, recruited from every corner of the globe, that a voice from so eminent a station as his could be lifted to sound a note of genuine moral leadership in public life. It is not always easy to do that. One must be prepared to face the sarcasm and the ridicule of the press, the gibes and the sneers of those who are before all things practical men, and the misunderstanding of those who would like

to know how to help, but who are blind to an issue of principle. We need in this city and in this dear country of ours voices in high place which will sound that note of moral leadership and which will dare to say that an issue, even at the polls, between opposing candidates and as to a public office, is at bottom ethical and must be faced by each man's conscience, apart from each man's interest.

Then I like to remember the service Bishop Potter did—and it was a bold service—when he stood, on a historic occasion, in the pulpit of old St. Paul's Church, and in the presence of a President of the United States, said what was in his heart about corruption in our public life and the corroding influence of the spoils system in politics. The whole nation, East and West, North and South, rose to its feet in splendid appreciation, not only of his courage, but of the sure instinct which led him to seize that dramatic moment to say to every American what under other circumstances perhaps but few Americans would have heard.

I remember, too, that, standing in his place in Sanders' Theatre, perhaps twenty years ago, he pronounced the oration before the Harvard Chapter of the Society of Phi Beta Kappa, and that, with the insight of a shrewd psychologist and student of human nature he put his hand on the weakness of the scholar in his

relation to the life of citizenship. Bishop Potter did not taunt the scholar, he did not sneer at him, he did not call him names, he did not decry him, he did not ask for what end his scholarship. He simply said that the scholar must be prepared to combat the natural tendency of his scholarship to aloofness, the criticism which becomes indifference and which withdraws a large number of the flower of the nation from the life which belongs to them and to which they belong.

There are some fine passages in that oration. They are instinct with sound feeling, with knowledge of generous youth, with appreciation of the meaning of ambition and with full emphasis upon that one insistent note, the necessity for perpetual civic service that one's self may be perfected and ripened and matured.

It is of this side of Bishop Potter's life and activity that I am thinking tonight, and it is to this side of his character that I am asking your attention.

One sometimes wonders, when he reads the speculations of modern science, what happens to the energy of the little ripple in the pond, which is set in motion by the casting of a pebble from a child's hand. From imperceptible to infinitesimal the ripple moves away toward the sandy shore. Its impact, our reason tells

us, goes on from sand to pebble, from pebble to stone, from stone to boulder, from boulder to mountain, from mountain to continent. Human eye cannot see or human hand measure the infinite smallness of it all; yet we know that there it is and that that child's hand has set in motion some change in this physical universe which, so far as we know, will go on forever.

Must it not be that a real personality, cast into the shoreless ocean of human life, which has done one great service, which has conceived one fine idea, which has uttered one splendid message of exhortation; must it not be that the energy of that personality, like the little wavelet in the pond, is going on through human hearts and minds and souls, unmeasured and unseen, and that long after this day and generation have passed away, in some manner, infinitely small, at a distance inconceivably vast, it will continue to affect and to move some aspect of human life?

It is because we think of something like this that we like to follow with grateful regard great personalities as they go from us and leave a little rippling wave passing from our sight on its way toward its unceasing service.



ADDRESS OF
REV. DR. MARVIN R. VINCENT

MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW CENTURIONS: I shall offer no apology for having put the little that I have to say upon paper. My personal interest in the theme of the evening is such that I should hesitate to trust myself to the freedom of extemporaneous discourse, lest I should trespass upon both your time and your patience.

I count it a privilege to pay my brief tribute to the memory of Bishop Potter, not only because, as a member of the Century, I recall his long, prominent and happy identification with it, but also on the ground of a personal friendship extending over nearly fifty years.

My acquaintance with him began in 1859, in the City of Troy, where, for seven years, he was the Rector of St. John's Parish. In smaller communities the contact is more frequent and more intimate than in great cities, and we came,

both socially and in public life, into familiar relations. Although representing different religious bodies, that circumstance never emerged in our intercourse. A loyal son of his Church, his religion and his churchmanship alike recognized and included all true Christian hearts, and all forms of the common faith. He was known as an active and useful citizen, no less than as an earnest and faithful clergyman, and was in touch with all important matters of local interest. Throughout that community he was recognized as a Christian gentleman, combining the graceful dignity of his professional position with the unaffected geniality of a companion and neighbor.

In this earlier and smaller environment were exhibited or foreshadowed the traits which marked his later and longer career. As Bishop of a great metropolitan diocese, it was impossible for him to confine his attention to graver matters. The position thrust upon him a bewildering number and variety of minor details, and the discharge of numerous minor functions. He frankly accepted the necessity, and surrendered the ideal of a symmetrical and unified scheme of life, without surrendering the ideal of a many-sided and fruitful life. Not infrequently a man whose time and energy are thus cut up into fragments is belittled by the process, contracted

to the dimensions of the petty details with which he deals, and degenerates into a machine with its cogs adjusted to each day's monotonous revolution. But somehow, in his acceptance of fragmentariness, and largely by means of it, he contrived to evolve a distinct, broad and strongly characteristic life. He was never above the details of his work, but he habitually made the impression of being larger than his round of work.

There was one thing which sharply distinguished him, and which entered as fibre into his influence both as a man and as a clergyman; namely, that he was, in the very best sense, a man of the world. The time is past when such a statement could produce a shock, or seem to conflict with his position and duty in the religious sphere. The time is past when religion was held to find its highest expression in cloistered isolation from the world. Bishop Potter had a definite sense and recognition of the stress and the claim of the unseen, spiritual world; but he believed, I take it, that, in this present time, the principal function of Heaven is to quicken and lift and irradiate this life in which we toil and fight and suffer. Hence he threw himself into the living world of men, and made himself a living part of it, participating in its joys, and, wherever he could, lending his shoulders to lift it out of its

sordidness and sorrow; and because of this he was the larger and the better man, the better Christian, and the nearer to the true ideal of the minister of the Gospel. He did not preach to men about a world which he had merely imagined in the retirement of his library, but about a world which he knew by personal contact with its hard and rough and evil side. His thought and his sympathy ranged far outside of the immediate circle of his clerical and official duties. He was open-eyed to current public issues; he had opinions and not mere impressions respecting great social and political questions, and vigorously applied his energy to their adjustment.

Without pretending to minute and accurate scholarship, the whole structure and trend of his mind was scholarly, his instincts and affinities were always and definitely in the direction of liberal culture, and both the substance and the style of his public utterances bore this stamp.

He was preëminently tactful. He was often confronted with conditions where it would have been easy for a dogmatic and opinionated man, or a man with exaggerated ideals of Episcopal prerogative, to develop sharp and embarrassing issues: but he preferred to adjust a difficulty rather than to raise or to force one. He had the wisdom to discern points which he could

conscientiously throw into the background, or ignore altogether, and which would be certain to adjust themselves if let alone: to distinguish between questions that were really and radically vital, and those which were transient, and exaggerated by momentary irritations and prejudices.

Yet he was no compromiser or trimmer, as he was more than once charged with being. He is not the wisest, or the safest, or the most consistent man who never changes his attitude, and who refuses, on occasion, to confess himself mistaken. He met an issue with courage and determination. His face, which we all knew so well, was a truthful index of a firm will and of capacity for cleanly-cut decision. His position on certain social questions sometimes exposed him to censure and to ridicule; but neither censure nor ridicule could divert him from the course which his conscience and his judgment had laid down. He was frankly open to the demonstration of error in his own plans and projects, but he would hold steadfastly by them until he was convinced that he was mistaken, or until they were proved to be impracticable. Any one who should presume upon his kindly courtesy and suavity with the expectation of finding him pliable or plastic to the appeal of a falsehood or a sham, was sure to have his eyes very promptly opened. There

was in him a dash of imperious quality which rarely asserted itself, but which would flash out now and then when he was dealing with a refractory personage, or with a needlessly complicated issue. He was quite capable of drastic speech on occasion. During our residence in Troy I was one morning scurrilously attacked in one of the daily newspapers. I promptly received a note from him, in which he said: "I don't know whether you are going to take any notice of the extraordinary demonstration in this morning's 'Whig.' There may not be as much sulphur in your blood as there is in mine, but if there be, and you conclude to reply to the cub who calls himself 'Maestro,' I hope you will handle him without gloves. A man who assaults people in that slap dash style needs to have his hide taken off, and the brine well rubbed in."

His versatility and adaptability were remarkable. No situation seemed to surprise or embarass him. Most of us have seen and heard him on many and various public occasions, some of which called for exceptional tact and readiness. I do not think that we ever knew him to fail in saying just the right thing, and in the most felicitous way. He met the occasion, whatever it was, and touched the core of it, and did not evade it, as is so often done by

a man who does not know what he is talking about, with a showy display of mere words.

Although he never obtruded or emphasized the clergyman or the Bishop, he held his sacred office in reverent esteem, and graced it with becoming dignity. Those who knew him only in superficial social interchanges were always impressed with his unaffected kindliness, his genial humor, his ready wit and his deftness in repartee. The gentleman in him was not the mere veneering of polished manners. It was the outflowering of a generous nature, and those who knew him better often came upon the "integri fontes" of his deeper personality, by whose living waters they were quickened and refreshed. Among a number of letters from him I have carefully preserved one which has a peculiar sacredness to me, and from which I venture to quote a few lines, because they give a glimpse into the heart of the man. On his election as Bishop in 1883 I wrote him a letter of congratulation, to which, of course, I did not expect a reply. But, a few days after, I received a note, written at the Secretary's table of the House of Bishops, and apparently in some brief interval of official business. He said: "I do not think you can guess how much your brotherly words have cheered and helped me. Give me a place in your prayers, and

may God draw us all closer together in the bond of a common love and a common service."

We honored the Bishop, but we loved the man. Forceful and efficient as he was in the discharge of his official duties, strongly as he impressed himself upon his position, his deepest and most abiding impress is that of his personality. It was truthfully written by one of his clergy: "The dignity and charm of such a personality as Bishop Potter's, which added lustre to the office he bore, and yet were accompanied by broad and deep sympathies with the life of his generation, will ever remain to many who have known him as among the most beautiful and gracious memories with which a life can be blessed. And among those who have had him in their homes,—humble homes in the country, to whom his coming was an event of a year, who felt that he brought to their firesides and to their tables a personality stamped with the citizenship of the great, wide world of which they saw so little,—indeed among all who have really known his gracious charm and felt his simple kindness and true humanity, there will be abiding pain, and long-enduring sense of loss."

He was spared to a ripe age. The years had more than begun to show their traces.

We who miss him most are glad that his well-earned rest and reward have come.

"For safe with right and truth he is.
As God lives he must live alway:
There is no end for souls like his,
No night for children of the day."



THE WARRIOR-PRIEST

He was our warrior-priest beneath whose gown
The mailèd armor took full many a dent
When, at the front, all gallantly he went,
In civic fight, to save the belovèd town;
Then did the proud, outrageous foe go down,
To shame and wide disaster swiftly sent,
Struck by his steel to flight—in wonderment
To see that calm brow wear the battle frown.
For he was courteous as a knight of eld,
And he the very soul of friendliness;
The spirit of youth in him lost never its power;
So sweet his soul, his passing smile could bless;
But this one passion all his long life held:
To serve his Master to the last, lingering hour.

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

CENTURY CLUB
December 12, 1908



ADDRESS OF
JOSEPH H. CHOATE, Esq.

Mr. President: On such a dignified occasion as this I did not like to trust to extemporaneous speech, and I therefore ask to read a brief appreciation of our departed friend.

I certainly could not, for want of knowledge, have talked about him as a Bishop. I cannot remember having ever seen him in church, and certainly never heard him preach. In truth, I love the outside of the churches quite as well as the inside, and am very like James Thomson—not the poet of "The Seasons," although he spelled his name in the same way. Few of you, probably, remember him, but he was a great habitué here twenty, thirty, forty years ago. He subscribed liberally to the church, which his wife attended, duly escorted by him, and the pastor called him a buttress of the Church; but Evarts, a great pal of his, said he must have been a flying buttress. Now

that is the way, I am afraid, in which I present myself; and flying buttresses, as everybody knows, certainly cannot see what is going on inside, in the chancel or in the pulpit.

But if you will let me speak of him as a man of the world, as a man among men, which was the phase in which I knew him best, and was in frequent contact with him for thirty years, I shall be glad to do so. In fact we were so much together on the same platforms, in the same causes, that we must have grown to look alike. At any rate, I was often taken for him in the cars, in the street, in the elevator, much to his amusement. One day a good lady sitting opposite to me in an omnibus began to talk to me about her spiritual condition. When I drew back, a little startled, she started, too, and exclaimed, "Why, are you not Bishop Potter?" Again, in an Elevated car, I sat next to a man who was reading an evening paper, which had a picture of the Bishop. Seeing me looking at it he said, "Do you know, sir, how very much alike you and the Bishop look?" I replied, "I have sometimes been mistaken for him, but I don't see it." "Why," said he, "the resemblance is perfect, only the Bishop never looks half as clerical as you always do."

I got this off on the Bishop once at a public meeting, and he gave me a Roland for

my Oliver, saying, "Well, that is the best thing I have ever heard about Choate."

By a man of the world I do not mean a worldly-minded man at all, but a man that was in close touch and sympathy with men and women all about him, interested in their affairs, conduct and conversation; ready to do for them, act with them, think for them; and that without regard to their class, quality or condition; and this Bishop Potter was, in an eminent degree.

It is such men who make the best bishops, lawyers, diplomatists, presidents—the best anything, in fact, because they are so human, and Bishop Potter was very human. He chose for his motto, "Homo sum, et nihil humani a me alienum puto," and he always lived up to that motto. Whether as president of this club, where, of course, he mingled with the best men in the city, or of the Thursday Evening Club, where he met the best women, or in the deadly heat of summer at the settlement house in Stanton Street, surrounded by the men, women and children of the slums, studying their wants and doing all he could for them; visiting the sick in the hospitals or the wicked in prison; in crowded assemblies speaking for every kind of good cause; at the dinner table with men of his own craft or of any craft, he was always *the man*, full of human interest and

sympathy; and the goodness of his heart, quite as much as the strength of his head, made him the leader that he was for so many years in the social life of New York.

Of course he was a prodigious worker, never allowing himself an idle moment. Another of his mottoes must have been, "Never be idle," and this was one other secret of his marvelous influence and success. If you could have followed him about the city you would have found him, I think, in some such labor as the Rector of St. Martin's in the Fields found Gladstone. He was visiting one of his parishoners, a street crossing sweeper, and asked him if anybody had been to see him. "Why, yes," said he, "Mr. Gladstone." "What Mr. Gladstone?" "Why, the great Mr. Gladstone himself." "He often speaks to me at my crossing, and, missing me, he asked my mate if I was ill and where I lived, and so came to see me, and read the Bible to me."

His friends often wondered how he found time to accomplish all the countless things he did. Sermons every Sunday, addresses every night, parochial work, parish work, committees and meetings of all sorts, and, with it all, time for invalids and sufferers and anxious folks of all kinds who came to him or whom he visited for comfort and consolation. But he did find the time. He must have thought



out his addresses and sermons in his waking hours in bed, and finished them on the wing, as he walked or rode, for he had the grand habit of riding every day, and he certainly never threw away an hour. Time he valued far more than money, and as Franklin said, "Take care of the pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves," so he said, "Take care of the minutes and the hours, days, weeks and years will give a good account of themselves."

Before I quit the point of his interest in the East Side, in our people of the lowest condition, I should like to pay to him the same tribute that he paid to another old Centurion, Theodore Roosevelt, a co-laborer with him in all that sort of philanthropic work. I do not mean the President, but his father, who led a strenuous life and was in his day a great power for good in New York; not so famous, but quite as worthy as the son. "Theodore Roosevelt," he says, "in the Newsboys' Lodging House, in the Cripples' Hospital, in the heart of the little Italian flower girl who brought her offering of grateful love to his door the day he died, has left behind him a monument the like of which mere wealth could never rear, and the proudest achievements of human genius never hope to win." So in city and country alike Bishop Potter made

himself beloved for his kindness and sympathy. When he lay dying at Cooperstown on the Fourth of July, the Selectmen requested men and boys alike to abstain from all noise, —so inseparable from the day, as John Adams, who must have been a great lover of noise, advised,— and it passed with all the stillness of a Sabbath Day; not a gunshot, not a cracker, not even a torpedo; and so this friend of humanity, for the love the people bore him, was allowed to die in peace.

Before I refer to the long catalogue of good causes to which he was always devoting himself, I should like to insist for a moment upon the immense self-denial, the constant sacrifice of comfort and personal convenience, the fatigue and exhaustion which such work involves. The laborers are few and the pressure upon them is pitiless. I have heard that the number of subscribers to the organized charities in New York is very small, not more than a few thousands, in our vast host of well-to-do citizens; not nearly so many as the owners of automobiles. The same names are constantly found on all the subscription papers. So I know that the list of men who actively participate, by their personal presence, thought and speech, in all the movements to promote the social advancement of our people, is a very meagre one. Most men prefer to give what

they are pleased to call their sympathy, and devote themselves to their business and after that is over, to their slippered ease at home, to cards, to books, to the theatre, to the opera or to sleep. They haven't the least idea what it costs, what it takes out of a man, after the full day's work is done, to brace up and give evening after evening, week in and week out, year in and year out, to philanthropic, charitable, educational, social and public work, as Bishop Potter, who, from his high character and position, was always called on, was perpetually doing.

I venture to say, in his more than thirty years of active work, that never a week passed, hardly a day, in which he was not actually engaged in some such good work, and such pressure was brought to bear upon him that he found it impossible to say "No." It was not a part of his professional work, but was in addition to it all, and the proper work of a Bishop is enough to test the endurance of the strongest, as you all know. Was it some movement to advance or extend education in the thousand and one forms in which it is constantly coming up, or for the correction and cure of some social evil, or for the organization of charities, to improve the condition of the poor, or to induce the rich to come forward and give the aid that was needed, for the

relief of prisoners, or of sufferers from some of those great catastrophes which are constantly occurring, or some purely social occasion, or for the rescue of the negro race,— no matter what the cause was,— so only that it involved the public welfare or the relief of suffering humanity,—Bishop Potter was always called upon and always ready. And besides this his study was daily besieged for advice by men and women, who thought, that because he was a Bishop, he certainly could do something for them.

If one of our clerical brethren would lend me his pulpit and let me preach from the text, "Whosoever would be chief among you, let him be your servant," I certainly would illustrate it by the whole life of Bishop Potter.

Sometimes his engagements were more than he could possibly keep. I remember once, in the infancy of Barnard College, when we were straining every nerve to start it,— after Columbia had banged its doors upon women,— and he was to be the chief speaker, but he didn't come, and I was put up to talk against time until Bishop Potter came; and for more than an hour I talked about everything and about nothing, until at last I had to adjourn the meeting; and afterwards it turned out that the Bishop had been caught equally unawares somewhere else and kept at work the whole evening.

He managed to get a vast deal of interest and amusement out of his work as he went along, and kept his eyes constantly open for what I may call human incidents. Once we were speaking together at the opening of Captain Webb's School for Sailor Boys, and when I sat down the Bishop, who was presiding, said to me, "Did you see that pretty girl who was enjoying our speeches so much?" and called my attention to a very young lady, whose hand was held by a much older lady who sat by her side and constantly played upon it as on a piano. It was Helen Keller, deaf and blind and dumb, but she was enjoying the meeting as much as anybody, and the Bishop enjoyed her more than he did the meeting.

I wish that his example might stimulate some of our lazy and self-indulgent ones to brace up and throw off their slippers and smoking jackets, and help fill the great gap that he has left.

His buoyant temperament was worth millions. His love of fun was a great help to him in his overwhelming labors, and any joke at his own expense or that of his profession was always most welcome to him. He loved to tell of the old lady on whom he was making a parochial visit and whom he asked the question whether she believed in apostolic succession, and, after long pondering, she replied,

"Well, I have nothing agin it." "Nothing agin it," which represents in our day quite a high degree of faith.

He loved Mr. Carter's story of the young man who was trying for a license to enter the ministry, in the good old days, and the examiners put him through all the standard questions, which he answered well, until they came to the final test, "Would you be willing to be damned for the glory of God?" to which he said, "Of course not," and was turned down and went away sorrowful. But he was determined to succeed and to try again, if he had failed at first. So he came the next year, and when they came to the crucial question, he was ready for them. "Would you be willing to be damned for the glory of God?" "Why, certainly," he said, "I should much prefer it." It is needless to say that he got his license without delay.

Thus, besides being a distinguished Bishop and an eminent publicist as the preceding speakers have described him, he was a most public spirited and useful citizen, a genuine philanthropist, altogether worthy to be classed with the great Centurions of the past whose company he has joined; such men as Bellows and Olmsted and Roosevelt and Hewitt, and Dodge and Jesup. And let us hope that our ranks will never fail to supply them with worthy successors.

ADJOURNMENT





THE BORROWER WILL BE CHARGED AN OVERDUE FEE IF THIS BOOK IS NOT RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY ON OR BEFORE THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW. NON-RECEIPT OF OVERDUE NOTICES DOES NOT EXEMPT THE BORROWER FROM OVERDUE FEES.

CANCELLED
SEP 27 1995
2892528

Henry Codman Potter;
Widener Library
004350612
3 2044 086 393 477

